Finding Your Way
to a
Florida-Friendly Landscape
Bradenton Beach Eco Expo

Florida-Friendly Landscaping: What is it??

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Outline

- What is FYN?
- FYN Partners
- FYN Program Components
- FYN – Nine Principles
- FYN Resources for Community Associations
What Is FYN?
What is the FYN?

► Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) was developed to preserve Florida’s natural resources by creating beautiful and environmentally-friendly landscapes. Through stakeholder education and awareness, this program addresses the serious problems of soil and water quality degradation caused by stormwater runoff and non-point source pollution.

► IFAS FYN Programs by County
Definitions:

► **Stormwater Runoff** -
  - Rainwater that flows off of yards, roads and parking lots, and washes back into streams, bays and other water reservoirs. This runoff can carry pollutants into our water supply (surface and groundwater).

► **Non-point source pollution** –
  - Sources of pollution that can not be pinpointed to any single cause and are usually associated with trash, car oil, chemical lawn products, and other residues that are easily carried away by flowing water.
Why a Florida-Friendly Yard?

Florida-Friendly landscaping principles will help homeowners transform their yard into one that will not only conserve precious water resources and reduce pollution, but will also help save time, energy, and money.
FYN Partners
FYN Program Partners

- Concerned Citizens
- Members of Private Industry
- Sarasota Bay Estuary Program
- Tampa Bay Estuary Program
- University of Florida
  - Institute for Food And Agricultural Sciences (IFAS)
- SouthWest Florida Water Management District
- City and County Governments
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
FloridaYards.org

- FloridaYards.org website
- A collaborative effort of these partners:
  - Institute for Food And Agricultural Sciences (IFAS)
  - Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection
  - Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Program
  - SWFWMD
  - MyFlorida.com
- Website Components:
  - Florida-friendly Landscaping 101
  - Interactive Yard
  - Florida-friendly Plant Database
  - Professional’s Corner
FYN Program Components
FYN Program Components

- Outreach
  - Schools
  - Public events
- Website
- Workshops and Classes
- Landscape Assistance Consultations
- Yard Recognitions
Outreach

Downtown Bradenton Farmer’s Market

Southeast Guide Dog Holiday Open House
Outreach

Home & Garden Expo

Lakewood Ranch
“The Nature of Florida Living”
FYN on Extension’s Website

http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu
Workshops
Landscape Assistance

- 90 minute meeting by appointment
- A brainstorming session focusing on a homeowner’s landscape
- 1 or 2 Yard Advisors meet with homeowner
- FYN and other educational materials provided
- Opportunity for homeowner to share photos, site sketch, plant samples for ID
Yard Recognitions
FYN - Nine Principles
Principles of a Florida Yard

- Right Plant - Right Place
- Water Efficiently
- Use Fertilizer Appropriately
- Mulch
- Provide for Wildlife
- Manage Yard Pests
- Recycle
- Reduce Stormwater Runoff
- Protect the Waterfront
FYN – 9 Principles

Right Plant - Right Place
Right Plant - Wrong Place?
Right Plant - Wrong Place?
What are the site conditions?

- **Soil**
  - Sand, silt, clay,
  - Organic materials
  - pH
- **Light**
  - Sun or shade
- **Drainage**
  - Wet or dry
  - Drainage patterns
- **Structures and obstructions**
  - Utility lines (overhead and underground)
  - Sidewalks / driveways
Landscape Functions?

• How do you currently use, or plan to use, your property?
  ▪ Family Activities
  ▪ Pets
  ▪ Outdoor entertainment
  ▪ Wildlife Habitat
  ▪ Enhancing or hiding a view

► Level of Maintenance
Key to Success

Proper planning and plant selection:

- Can avoid problems later
- Can save energy, effort, water, money, etc.
- Makes the landscape more enjoyable
Know Your Plants

- UF/IFAS Extension/FYN Plant List 2006
- USDA Plant Hardiness Zones for Florida
- Waterwise Florida Landscapes
Plant Selection Considerations

- Mature Height / Width
- Evergreen / Deciduous
- Flower
  - Color
  - Bloom Period
  - Scent
- Sunlight / Shade Requirements
- Soil
  - pH
  - Salinity
- Known plant problems or pests
- Fertilizer needs
- Water requirements
- General Availability
- Cost
Functional Turf Areas

► Berms and Swales
  - Turf is an excellent filter, helping to diminish pollutants and stormwater run-off

► Recreational areas
  - Turfgrass is resistant to foot traffic, produces oxygen and reduces temperature, glare, noise, and dust

► Pet areas
Alternatives To Turf

- Landscaping beds require less effort and cost less to maintain than turf.

- Consider low-maintenance ground covers, mulched landscape beds, and pathways.
Functional Landscaped Beds

► Annuals, perennials, ground covers, shrubs or trees in a mulched area can be used to:
  ❖ Screen a view
  ❖ Cover oddly-shaped areas difficult to mow or irrigate
  ❖ Plant a shady area where turf won’t grow
  ❖ Group plants for easy maintenance
  ❖ Provide color, shade, or windbreak
Other Plant-related resources

► EDIS Publications related to FYN Principles
► “Identification and Control of Non-invasive Plants in the Tampa Bay Area” booklet
► IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-native Plants in Florida’s Natural Areas:
  - Prohibited Species
  - Central Zone: Invasive – Not Recommended
  - Central Zone: Caution
  - Central Zone: Species that can be recommended
FYN – 9 Principles

Right Plant - Right Place

Water Efficiently
Water Efficiently

- Use low-volume sprinklers
- Calibrate your sprinkler system
- Use a rain gauge
- Water $\frac{3}{4}$ inch when you see wilt
Water Efficient Landscapes

Always incorporate:

- Right plant, right place
- Choosing low maintenance plants and natives
- Grouping plants according to their water needs
- Using mulch
# Water Use Efficiency

## Controllable Factors
- Plant selection
- Plant placement
- Soil structure
- Mulching
- Irrigation
- Maintenance practices
- Human Tolerance
- Education

## Uncontrollable Factors
- Temperature
- Precipitation
- Sunlight
- Wind
- Soil texture
- Drainage
- Water quality
- Local water restrictions
Watering Tips

► Learn to recognize when plants *need* water

► In the heat of midday, some plants wilt. No amount of water will change this. If the plant is still wilted by evening, water it then.
When Do I Water?

► **Early morning or evening**
  - Temperature is cool and wind is calm
  - 40% - 60% of water applied evaporates in the afternoon sun!

► **SWFWMD Water Restrictions**

► **Manatee County Extension Water Conservation Program**
How Much Water?

- Apply $\frac{3}{4}$ inch water per application
- Soak soil thoroughly to promote a deeper, more drought tolerant root system
Measure It

- Use a rain gauge, or...

1) Place cans of equal diameter in random places underneath the sprinkler’s spray pattern
2) Measure the depth of water in each can
3) Add depth measurements & divide by the number of cans

Determine the length of time it takes for your sprinkler system to deliver $\frac{3}{4}$ inch water.
Irrigation Systems

- Calibrate the sprinkler system
- Install a rain shut-off device
- Have your sprinkler system “tuned up” yearly
- Replace worn hose and faucet washers

Rain Shut-off Device
Low Volume Sprinklers

Micro-jet sprinkler  Drip emitters

Micro-irrigation can improve watering efficiency.
FYN – 9 Principles

Right Plant -
Right Place

Water
Efficiently

Use Fertilizer
Appropriately
Fertilize Appropriately

Read the bag

Use slow-release

Use compost as fertilizer

Keep away from water
Why Apply Fertilizer?

► To obtain a desired result:
  - Establish newly installed plants
  - Promote root and shoot growth
  - Enhance flowers and fruit set
  - Correct or prevent nutrient deficiencies
Florida Fertilizer Label

Florida law requires companies to print the precise nutrient content

Read the label carefully to determine:

“Guaranteed Analysis”

16 – 2 - 8

nitrogen – phosphorous – potassium

Indicates the bag contains, by weight:

- Total nitrogen (N) ......................... 16%
- Available phosphate (P\textsubscript{2}O\textsubscript{5}) ........ 2%
- Soluble potash (K\textsubscript{2}O ) .................. 8%
Selecting a Fertilizer

► Buy fertilizer that contains only the nutrients you need
  ▪ Test soil to determine what nutrients are needed

► If applying N, you need to consider what source to use
  ▪ Water Soluble- rapidly released to plants
  ▪ Water Insoluble- slowly released
When Do I Apply Nitrogen & Potassium to Lawns & Landscape Plants?

► During the active growing season
  ▪ In spring, after danger of frost
  ▪ In early fall, before winter dormancy
  ▪ Year-round in South Florida
  ▪ Apply iron to green up lawn in summer, Use chelated iron or iron sulfate

► During establishment

► During recovery
  ▪ From drought, wear, insects, or disease
Fertilizing Lawns

► The potential for leaching and burning is greater due to misapplication

- Apply no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. N/1000 ft$^2$
- Irrigate fertilizer in with $\frac{1}{4}$” of water
- Postpone fertilization if rainfall is expected

► Too much water can move the nutrients past the root zone, where they can leach into groundwater or contribute to pollution of our bays and other water bodies through stormwater runoff.
FYN – 9 Principles

Right Plant - Right Place

Water Efficiently

Use Fertilizer Appropriately

Mulch
Types of Mulch

Types of Mulch

- Organic
  - Decomposes slowly
  - Improves sandy soils
  - Natural appearance

Inorganic
- Permanent
- Reflects sun
- Safety concern

Examples of Mulch:
- Red Lava Rock
- Black Lava Rock
- Pine Straw
- Mixed Wood Recycled
- Shell
- Septic Stone
- Pine Bark
- Flori-Mulch
- Rubber
- Marble
- Red Recycled
- Cypress
- 1 1/2 White Gravel
- 3/4 White Gravel
- Cedar
- Newspaper
- 5-8 Brown Gravel
- 1/2 Brown Gravel
- Future Mulch
- Mexican Beach Pebble
Mulch

- Mulching is an important principle which will help:
  - Buffers soil temperatures
  - Discourage weed germination and growth
  - Organic mulch material improve soil fertility as they decompose
  - Retain soil moisture
Guidelines for Using Mulch

► Apply a 2-3 inch layer
► “Volcano mulching” or mulch applied too deeply, hinders oxygen exchange to roots, which stresses the plant and causes root rot
► Mulch out to a tree’s drip line or beyond, at least an 8-foot diameter.
► Rake old mulch to break up any matted layers
► Do not use cypress mulch because harvesting from the wild depletes wetlands
► Shell, crushed stone or pebbles can be used as mulch, but don’t contribute to the soil’s nutrient or organic content or water holding capacity.
FYN – 9 Principles

- Right Plant - Right Place
- Water Efficiently
- Fertilizer Appropriately
- Mulch
- Attract Wildlife
Attract Wildlife

food

cover

water

shelter
All Animals Need:

- Food
- Cover
- Water
- Space

Animals will only reside or forage in an area that contains enough of these four essential elements to maintain daily activities.
Fruit Bearing Plants

Southern Red Cedar
_Juniperus silicicola_

Bluestem Palm
_Sabal minor_

Sea Grape
_Coccoloba uvifera_
Florida Privet
Forestiera segregata

- Native shrub
  - ~10 ft
- Full to partial sun
- Throughout Florida
- Fast grower
- Drought and salt tolerant
- Dense cover and fruits attract birds
Wild Coffee
*Psychotria nervosa*

- Native shrub
- ~8 ft
- Partial to full shade tolerant
- Blooms spring-summer
- Attracts butterflies and birds
Nectar Plants

Firebush
*Hamelia patens*
Golden Dew Drop  
*Duranta repens*

- Shrub ~ 14 feet
- Full to partial sun
- Blooms year-round
- Throughout Florida
- High drought tolerance
- Attracts butterflies
Porterweed

*Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*

- Native and non-native perennial ~ 4 ft
- Full to partial sun
- Blooms year-round
- Medium salt and drought tolerance
Provide Cover

- Increasing Biodiversity by using a variety of plants in your yard design
- Create landscaped islands and natural corridors of plants that connect bordering properties
Water

- Permanent water feature
- Sound of running water attracts many animals

Puddling-Butterflies obtain water and minerals from liquid in pore spaces.

Puddling station
Managing for Wildlife

- Vertical layers of vegetation
- Plant natives
- No pesticides!
- Stop mowing - Weeds add wildlife value to your yard!

Bidens alba
Right Plant - Right Place

Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Water Efficiently

Fertilizer Appropriately

Mulch

Attract Wildlife
Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Biological control:
• Good bugs
• Bacteria
• Animals that eat or kill pest insects

When biological control fails, use insecticidal soaps, or horticultural oils on pest bugs. Use Bacillus thuringiensis (Dipel, Thuricide) on caterpillars.
All Bugs are NOT Bad Bugs!

- Cannot have an insect-free yard!
- Less than 1% of insects are pests
- Beneficials naturally help keep pests under control
Check plants regularly. Walk around your yard and observe your plants and lawn for signs of problems.

Avoid routine applications of pesticides. Treat only affected areas rather than spraying your entire lawn or yard.

Know 5 beneficial insects.

Use environmentally-friendly pesticides.

Use non-chemical approaches to pest control.
FYN – 9 Principles

Right Plant - Right Place

Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Water Efficiently

Recycle Yard Waste

Fertilizer Appropriately

Mulch

Attract Wildlife
Why Recycle?

► Retains the nutrients in your landscape
► Saves money on fertilizer, mulch and waste disposal
► Florida law prohibits disposal of yard waste in lined landfills
Different Ways to Recycle

► Recycle grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn.
► Use fallen leaves and pine needles as mulch under trees and shrubs.
► Create self-mulching areas under large trees.
► Create and maintain a compost pile with kitchen scraps and yard waste.
Right Plant - Right Place

Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Water Efficiently

Recycle Yard Waste

Fertilizer Appropriately

Reduce Stormwater Runoff

Mulch

Attract Wildlife
Reduce Stormwater Runoff
Rain Barrels

Capture rain water for re-use to irrigate landscapes
Keep rain and sprinkler water onsite to prevent runoff from occurring.

- Use porous surfaces for walkways, patios and driveways
- Use berms, swales and terracing
- Direct downspouts toward beds or lawn
Because water can wash off our yards, it is important to reduce the amount of pollutants on our property.

► Remove trash
► Clean up oil spills and leaks with cat litter
► Pick up after pets
► Sweep grass clippings and soil back onto lawns
FYN – 9 Principles

Right Plant - Right Place

Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

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Reduce Stormwater Runoff

Mulch

Protect the Waterfront

Attract Wildlife
Protect the Waterfront

► Buffer with plants
► Use chemicals wisely or not at all
► Remember: Your land drains to some water body
Protect the Shoreline

Vegetated slopes

- Absorb nutrients
- Prevent erosion
- Attract wildlife
Pond Appeal

http://pond.ifas.ufl.edu/presentations.htm

► Pond Appeal 1: Enhancing the Beauty of Your Pond
  - Learn how to make your lake or pond into an oasis and give it “curb appeal.”
  - Pond Appeal 1 Presentations

► Pond Appeal 2:
  Healthy Ponds, Healthy Plants, Healthy Fish
  - Pond Appeal 2 Presentations

► Pond Appeal 3: Wetland Wildlife
  - Pond Appeal 3 Presentations
Landscapes bordering surface waters need to be maintained with special sensitivity to the environment.

- Establish a 10-30 ft “no fertilizer, no pesticide” zone along shoreline
FYN Resources for Community Associations
Resources for Associations

- Community Associations Institute
- Water Restrictions
- Green Industries Institute
- Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association
- Florida Irrigation Society
- Florida Landscape Maintenance Association
A Model Florida-Friendly CCR

- Covenants, Codes, and Restrictions that Address Environmental Issues in Residential Communities
- Florida-Friendly Landscaping Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions
- 2001 Florida Statute 373.185
Florida-Friendly Maintenance

- Considerations for Developing a Lawn and Landscape Maintenance Contract
- Environmental Landscape Management Guidelines Community Associations Can Use to Select a Landscaper and Write an Effective Landscaping Contract
A Florida Yard can be beautiful and environmentally friendly...
It’s up to you!